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SUBJECT: IRANIAN EMBASSY RESPONDS TO SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE

REF: KINSHASA 1309

¶1. (U) On August 28, the Congolese newspaper Le Potentiel printed the Iranian Embassy's denial of the August 6 Sunday Times article (reftel), which alleged a DRC-Iran uranium smuggling link. The Times reported that in October 2005 Tanzanian authorities stopped a shipment of Uranium 238 ore from the DRC's Katanga province that was destined for Iran.

¶2. (U) In publicly denouncing the allegations via a press release, the Iranian Embassy in Kinshasa stated that it "considers the publication of these allegations by the Western media to constitute psychological pressure with the goal of sullyng the peaceful, non-military, nuclear activities of Iran in the region. Thus, in recognizing its right to enrich uranium for peaceful, non-military ends, the Islamic Republic of Iran submits that the best solution dwells only in the pursuit of dialog and negotiation, without pressure or threat."

¶3. (U) The Iranian press statement also referenced the uranium smuggling denials by the GOI's Supreme Council of National Security on August 6 and the denouncements by the GDRC on August 9 and the Governor of Katanga on August 16.

¶4. (U) An Agence France Presse article also reported an official Iranian response to the allegations, citing the GOI's statement that it does not need to import uranium because it has its own mines and processing facility.  
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